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Speaker offers formula for reaching lost

RIDGECREST, N.C. (BP) — Less than a decade ago, leaders at Flamingo Road Church in Fort Lauderdale, Fla., discovered 90% of the congregation's recent growth spurt was coming from transfers from other churches.

"We were basically swapping sheep; we weren't reaching or impacting our community for Christ," Dan Southerland, teaching pastor at Flamingo Road, said in a July 13 message at Ridgecrest (N.C.) Conference Center.

He spoke to more than 1,300 Southern Baptist church staff and lay leaders attending a National Sunday School Leadership Training Conference.

Rather than becoming comfortable with the status quo, Flamingo Road's leadership made some dramatic changes in its approach to ministry.

They switched from being program-driven to purpose-driven and from committee-led to staff-led. The pastoral team stopped trying to do all the work and focused on equipping the laity as a ministry force.

They even changed their worship style to a more contemporary seeker-oriented format, and encouraged members to be intentional in building relationships with lost people.

The results? The church grew from a membership of 500 in 1990 to more than 2,000 today.

While Southerland is pleased about the size of the increase, he's even more pumped about its source — unchurched people represented 60% of the growth.

The changes were far from easy, Southerland admitted, adding moving to an intentional focus on reaching the

unchurched requires a "cutting-edge" approach to leadership.

He shared six keys for cutting-edge leaders with conference participants:

■ Evaluate the current conditions. Basically, you have three choices when evaluating a program, event or ministry, Southerland said: reaffirm, revise, or replace.

A willingness to consider the latter option is key, he said, adding: "You have to be willing to say Plan A is dead before you can ask, 'What is Plan B?'"

■ Prepare people for change. Vision casting is the required skill for this objective, Southerland said.

"You have to be able to paint a picture of what God wants to do in your church, the blueprints for growth. ... Until the people catch the vision or, better yet, until the vision catches them, you are not going to impact your community for Christ."

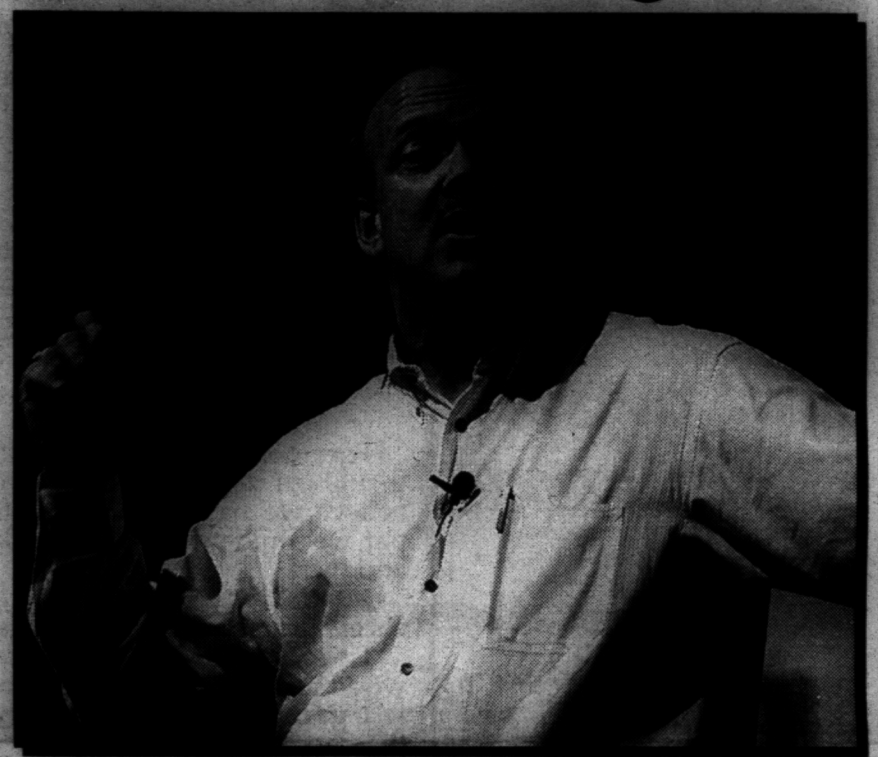
■ Motivate people to follow. One test of a leader, Southerland said, is an affirmative answer to the question, "Is anyone following?"

"Anyone can take a trip; a leader gets people to go with him," he said, adding this requires the skill of motivation — the ability to move people.

■ Cross the barriers to growth. Cutting-edge leaders "don't get stuck up against the barrier, they push right through it," he said.

"If you want to reach people for Christ, you are going to have to take some chances. You can't have a 'play it safe attitude' and reach a lost world for Christ."

■ Take the new land. "We must live in two tenses," Southerland said, "fighting



CLAIMING THE LOST — Dan Southerland, teaching pastor at Flamingo Road Church in Fort Lauderdale, Fla., makes a point during a July 13 message on "Cutting Edge Leadership" at Ridgecrest (N.C.) Baptist Conference Center. (BP photo by Jim Veneman)

today's battles and planning tomorrow's." This requires the skill of strategic planning which asks the question, "What's coming tomorrow?"

Churches need to use binoculars so they can look ahead. Unfortunately, Southerland said, "most churches use a microscope; they are looking within. They are focused on themselves."

■ Desire all that God has for them. "A true leader is never fully content and never quite comfortable," Southerland said.

A desire for God, he added, comes from the ability to believe him, or faith. This means cutting-edge leaders

need to invest in kneepads because "you build faith by being on your knees before God (in prayer)."

"If you're OK with the status quo in your church, then you're not close to what God wants for you," Southerland told the church staff and lay leaders.

"How can we ever be comfortable when there is even one lost person in our neighborhood?"

The July 13-17 National Sunday School Leadership Training Conference was sponsored by the Sunday School division of LifeWay Christian Resources of the Southern Baptist Convention.

WHAT'S IN THE RECORD

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States changing SBC?

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B&H wins Gold Medallions

DALLAS (BP)—Two Broadman & Holman (B&H) books took home Gold Medallion Awards from the Evangelical Christian Publishers Association during the 1998 Christian Booksellers Association meeting in Dallas on July 13-16.

"Experiencing God Day by Day" by Henry and Richard Blackaby captured a Gold Medallion in the devotional category, while "Jesus and the Gospels" by Craig Blomberg won a Gold Medallion in the category of theology/doctrine.

Both books beat out four others in their categories. Three B&H books were named finalists at this year's awards.

Gold Medallion book awards, established in 1978, recognize the highest quality in Christian books.

Five books are nominated in each category, which ranges from Bibles and reference books to fiction and Christian living.

Looking back

10 years ago

Universal Studios offers a private screening of the controversial new film "The Last Temptation of Christ," before its Aug. 12 release. Southern Baptist Convention (SBC) president Jerry Vines agrees to arrange a small group of SBC leaders to view the film.

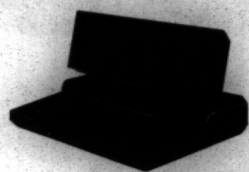
20 years ago

Trace Ridge Church, the newest of the 68 churches in Hinds-Madison Association, holds groundbreaking ceremonies for the first phase of a three-phase building program. The first phase consists of educational space and a 428-seat auditorium.

50 years ago

New Orleans Seminary breaks ground on July 1 for a new 75-acre campus on Gentilly Boulevard in New Orleans. The building program is to be financed by capital funds from the Southern Baptist Cooperative Program and by gifts of \$1,000 each from 1,000 Southern Baptist supporters.

EDITOR'S NOTEBOOK



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The littlest teachers

If Christians were polled on the area of spiritual life in which they assume the greatest piety, the answer would most likely be "prayer." We know how to pray. We've been doing it for quite a while. We've gotten pretty good at it.

Some of us even pray in King James Version, with plenty of impressive "thee's" and "thou's" and "whosoever's" thrown in for good measure.

As we grow older and become overly self-confident in careers and personal conduct, there is the danger that we can become overly self-confident about our prayer life, too. As much as we've practiced, we ought to be pretty good at it, right?

An honest appraisal of our prayer lives, however, might indicate otherwise. In our rushed-up, overfilled lives, it's all too common for our prayer life to be centered around what we want God to hear from us and not what God wants to hear from us.

We expect God to sit still and listen to us, without returning the courtesy. Too often, our prayers consist of laundry lists of self-perceived needs and desires. Almost as an afterthought, we give a quick nod to the missionaries and then we're off to sleep.

For most Christians, a little honesty would go a long way. As deeply as we believe we have this prayer thing down pat, we could use a reality check every now and then.

I think I've found the perfect reality check. I pray with preschoolers.

Unencumbered with the cares of the world and unmoved by what adults think is important, the prayers of the two preschoolers with whom I have the privilege of praying are as pure and heartfelt as any that reach the ears of God.

They understand prayer. They pray for a pregnant, hospitalized teenager and her baby even though they don't understand

why she isn't married.

They ask God to please talk with a neighbor to find out why he doesn't go to church, because they can't seem to get a good explanation from him.

They pray that everybody in the world (including dogs) will get enough food to eat.

They pray that the lost friends they invite to Vacation Bible School will like the refreshments.

They ask Jesus to take good care of Granny, the great-grandmother whose death gave them their first lesson in what happens to Christians after they die.

Each night of prayers with them is an admonishment to not take myself so seriously, that I am as much a child in the eyes of the Father as are they.

In my world of deadlines and denominational politics and broken lawn mowers, I quite often need to be reminded of that simple truth.

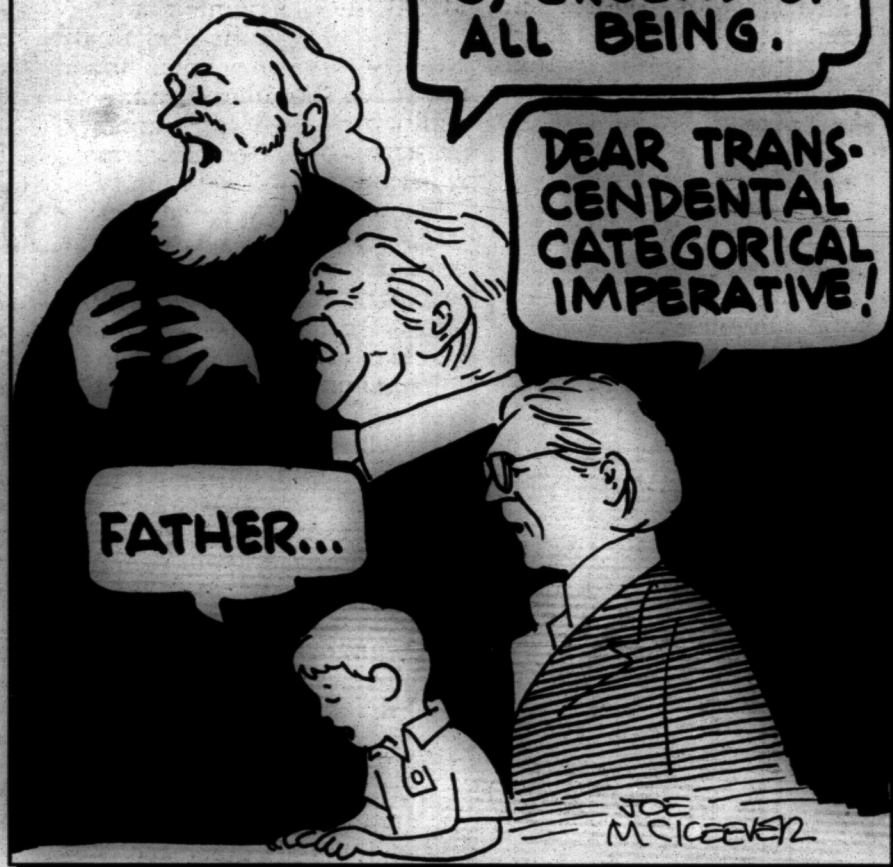
Is it any wonder that the Savior was so fond of children during his time on earth? He knew they needed no further evidence of a loving God than what they knew to be

O THOU UNMOVED
MOVER....

O, GROUND OF
ALL BEING.

DEAR TRANS-
CENDENTAL
CATEGORICAL
IMPERATIVE!

FATHER...

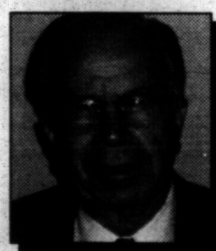


true in their hearts and souls (Matt. 11:25). He knew they held the key to understanding Heaven (Mark 10:13-16).

Maybe that's why so many preschool church workers are going on 20-30 years of service. Maybe they know how much is to be gained by time spent with the Father's children.

Maybe we could all learn a few things at the feet of the littlest teachers.

GUEST OPINION



Pray for peace

By Harry L. Raley, member
Alta Woods Church, Jackson

because we need to get as many people praying as possible.

As we pray for world peace we will want to pray for peace in our own lives and that of our families. We will want to pray that young people will not yield to temptations of alcohol, drugs, and sexual immorality. We should pray that victory can be won over crime, and criminals can be

influenced by Christians. We should pray for government leaders in our cities, states, and country as well as for all the nations of the world.

We think of Jesus as being the Prince of Peace. He said to his disciples "Peace I leave with you, my peace I give you. I do not give as the world gives. Do not let your hearts be troubled and do not be

afraid" (John 14:27). Pray that we will be aware of the peace that comes only through Christ living in the hearts of people. Prayer for peace should not be just for a special day but every day. God wants us to live in peace with ourselves and with those around us.

The day of prayer for peace can mean a lot to us individually. It can draw us closer to God through praying for a special need. It can remind us of our responsibility to pray for our government leaders instead of criticizing them. One of our church members said that he decided to try to pray for our president more than he criticizes him. This day of prayer can make us more conscious of praying for the physical and spiritual needs of people all over the world.

What we need most in our world is not more money, education, more ideas, books, or strategies. We need hands lifted up in prayer.

May we be faithful in praying and may God grant us peace all over the world!

Raley, a retired Southern Baptist foreign missionary, is prayer coordinator for the Mississippi Baptist Convention Board.

Day of Prayer for World Peace

Sunday, August 2, 1998

Youth Night '98 sees increase in decisions by teens

By William H. Perkins Jr.
Editor

More than 156 young people made spiritual decisions during the twin sessions of Mississippi Baptist Youth Night July 24-25 at the Mississippi Coliseum in Jackson, according to the chairman of the committee that planned this year's event.

Matt Buckles, consultant in the Church Administration/Pastoral Ministries department of the Mississippi Baptist Convention Board (MBCB), said attendance decreased slightly but spiritual decisions increased over the previous year.

Buckles estimated attendance at the July 24 evening session at 7,500 people, and the July 25

morning event at 1,500 people. Those numbers were a moderate decline from a year ago, he said.

However, the offering total of \$7,600 given during the two 1998 sessions surpassed last year's offering by nearly \$1,200, Buckles pointed out.

Performing at the 1998 Youth Night sessions was Small Town Poets, a popular group of Southern Baptist contemporary musicians from Georgia currently on tour around the country.

Featured speaker was Duffy Robbins, a well-known youth ministry specialist and chair of the department of youth ministry at Eastern College in St. David's, Penn.

Presenting testimonies at the twin sessions were Jamie Hopson

of First Church, Yazoo City; Jeremy Little of Sylvarena Church, Wesson; Ben Derrick of Woodland Hills Church, Jackson; Scott Perkins of First Church, Madison; and Sarah McDonnell of Broadmoor Church, Jackson.

Buckles reported that a new feature tested this year turned out to be a big hit. Both Small Town Poets and Robbins attended an autograph party after the Friday evening session at the Baptist Book Store in Ridgewood Court in Jackson.

Buckles said about 300 people attended the autograph party, which didn't wrap up until almost midnight.

In addition to Buckles, members of the Youth Night '98 planning committee include:

- ◆ Steve Wilson, pastor of Meadow Grove Church, Brandon.

- ◆ Gary Phillips, minister of youth at First Church, Quitman.

- ◆ David Bryant, minister of youth and recreation at First Church, Yazoo City.

- ◆ Michael Pierce, minister of education and youth at First Church, Pearl.

- ◆ Gary Watts, a layman at Wynndale Church, Terry.

- ◆ Larry Salter, consultant in the MBCB Sunday School department.



Robbins

- ◆ Susan Clark, consultant in the MBCB church music department.

Youth Night '99 sessions will be held at 7 p.m. on July 23 and 10 a.m. on July 24 at Mississippi Coliseum in Jackson.

For more information or to provide the planning committee with suggestions for future events, contact Buckles at P.O. Box 530, Jackson, MS 39205-0530. Telephone: (601) 968-3800 or toll-free outside Jackson (800) 748-1651.



THE
SECOND
FRONT PAGE



Small Town Poets

THE BAPTIST
Record

New WMU director, SS staffer approved

By William H. Perkins Jr.
Editor

The executive committee of the Mississippi Baptist Convention Board (MBCB) on July 25 approved a new executive director for Mississippi Woman's Missionary Union (WMU) and filled a vacant consultant position in the MBCB Sunday School department.

Kay Cassibry, current executive director of La. WMU in Alexandria and a former Girls in Action/Mission Friends consultant for Miss. WMU from 1993-95, will take over as the department's new executive director Sept. 1 when Marjean Patterson retires after 41 years of WMU service.



Cassibry

John Clendinning, minister of education at First Church, Louisville, will begin new duties on Aug. 17 as the general administration consultant in the MBCB Sunday School department.

Cassibry was born in Mobile, Ala., and considers Santa Rosa Shores Church in Gulf Breeze, Fla., to be her home church. She was baptized there at the age of nine by her pastor father.

Cassibry holds a master of arts degree from New Orleans Seminary in New Orleans (1993) and a master of arts in elementary education from the University of West Florida in Pensacola (1986).

She also graduated from Mississippi College with a bachelor of science in education degree (1980).

In addition to her WMU service in two states, she has served as children's minister at First Church in Pascagoula, preschool director at Morrison Heights Church in Clinton, and as a classroom teacher in Pascagoula and two Fla. school districts.

She was also Bible School director for the Singapore Baptist mission in Malaysia during the summer of 1985.

Cassibry is single. In placing the recommendation of the WMU executive director search committee before the MBCB executive committee, MBCB executive assistant Gene Dobbs said, "I am pleased to enthusiastically concur in this recommendation."

She is uniquely qualified by expertise, training, experience, and commitment to render exceptional service to the cause of Christ.

Clendinning also holds two masters degrees: a master of arts in religious education (1988) and a master of arts in marriage and family counseling (1988), both from Southwestern Seminary in Ft. Worth.

He also earned a bachelor of science degree in education and psychology from Samford University in Birmingham (1984).

Prior to his service in Louisville, he was minister of education and music at

Immanuel Church in Cleveland; minister of music and youth at Georgetown Church in Pottsboro, Texas; and minister of music and youth at First Church in Gunter, Texas.

Clendinning is married and the father of three children.

"Because of his academic preparation, varied experience, and demonstrated commitment, John will be able to strengthen the ministry of Mississippi Baptists as we continue our efforts to bring Mississippi and the world to Jesus," Dobbs said in recommending him to the executive committee.

In other business, the executive committee approved \$100,000 requested by the Mississippi Baptist Christian Action Commission to be used in the 1999 budget year for the dual purposes of opposing gambling and improving race relations.

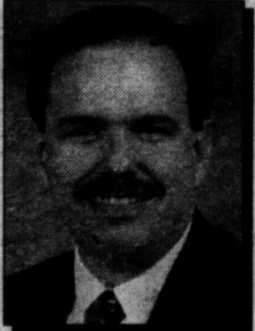
The executive committee also approved four new MBCB board members nominated by their respective associations:

- ◆ Golden Triangle Association: Sammy Crawford, associate pastor of Fairview Church, Columbus, to replace Tim Williams, former pastor of Mt. Vernon Church, Columbus. Williams accepted a call to First Church, Grenada.

- ◆ Lafayette Association: Charles Lipe, pastor of Clear Creek Church, Oxford, to replace Everett Childers, who moved out of state.

- ◆ Mississippi Association: Gary Bunch, pastor of Woodville Church, Woodville, to fill the unexpired term of Bill Broadwater, who moved out of state.

- ◆ Union Association: Charles Terrell, pastor of Port Gibson Church, Port Gibson, to fill an open term expiring in 1999.



Clendinning

Family waging courageous battle for life

HATTIESBURG (Special) — Patricia Johnson of Saucier deals with the reality of a sick child everyday. Not only does her 11-year-old son Billy Joe have Down's Syndrome, he is fighting a serious illness: acute lymphatic leukemia.

More than the cutting edge of medical care, more than the love and support of his extended family, Billy Joe depends on his mother Patricia.

She is determined to overcome every obstacle until her child is well, and she is doing so while maintaining her family and continuing her education.

Johnson is a physical education major at William Carey College's coast campus. She has maintained a dean's list academic standing.

"I brought all of my school supplies to the hospital. There I could study and sit with Billy Joe. It just seemed to work out," Johnson said.

Billy Joe was diagnosed in 1996 at University Medical Center in Jackson.

"Since that day, we have been

down a long road," said Johnson. She travels between Saucier and Jackson several times a week for Billy Joe's treatments, but that may end soon.

Billy Joe will have a bone marrow transplant in August at University Medical Center in Jackson.

Bone marrow transplants on children with Down's Syndrome are usually done at St. Jude's hospital in Memphis, Tenn., or at Houston Medical Center in Texas.

This will be the first operation of its kind in Mississippi.

For Johnson, the operation could not be done anywhere else. "He loves his doctors and nurses. They know him and understand his responses to treatment. Billy Joe knows that he is sick but I don't think he understands how serious it is," she said.

Billy Joe will be quarantined for four to eight weeks following the transplant. Unable to leave the sterile environment of his isolation room, his mother will be his only companion.

"We will be playing video games and watching a lot of television," she said.

Johnson, who already teaches at Saucier Elementary School in Saucier, was unable to donate bone marrow for Billy Joe.

His sixteen-year-old sister Penny Lynette will be the donor.

"Penny lined up to donate her marrow. There was never any question in her mind,"

Johnson said.

Every member of the family seems to be working together.

Billy Joe Sr., who works full time to maintain health insurance for his son, works in his spare time to complete construction on a new house he is building for his family.

"It's hard on him, being away from us so much, but he wants us to have a new house," Johnson said.

Mississippi's Make A Wish Foundation will send the Johnson family on a week-long vacation to the Smoky Mountains in Tennessee before the operation.

Johnson is looking forward to spending time with her husband and children, especially with Billy Joe feeling good, before their stay in Jackson.

"Even with everything going on, he is happy most of the time. He does have a stubborn streak, but the nurses call him 'their sweet boy.'"

When asked how she deals with a child with so many needs, Johnson responded,



AWAITING TRANSPLANT — Billy Joe Johnson is scheduled for a bone marrow transplant in August at University Medical Center in Jackson. He attends Orange Grove Elementary's special education program in Saucier. (BR special photo)

"You have to do what you have to do. People asked me if I was angry at God.

All I could say was that I had a baby that needed taking care of. I never questioned God, even after my mother died a few months after Billy Joe's diagnosis.

"I try to live by Joshua 1:9. 'Be strong and of good courage; be not frightened; neither be dismayed, for the Lord your God is with you wherever you go.'"

ABP plans magazine

HOUSTON (ABP) — FaithWorks, a new magazine published by Associated Baptist Press (ABP), made its debut in late June.

Plans call for the Christian lifestyle magazine to be published every other month at first and increase to monthly in 1999. It will be staffed separately from ABP's 8-year-old independent news service based in Jacksonville, Fla. The project also includes a companion web site, www.faith-works.com. ABP also has a new web site, www.abp-news.com.

The magazine is targeted at young adults, age 25 to 45, particularly those who do not read traditional Baptist publications and who say their needs are not met by current religious periodicals.

Articles in the first issue include an introduction to the "Millennials," a designation for the generation born since 1978; a resurgence in the use of the arts in worship; a profile of the Christian alternative rock group Jars of Clay; and tips on how to simplify a hectic life.

Off-site ministry projects leaving lasting impact

LOUISVILLE, Ky. (BP) — "God has brought us all here to do something through us," Sarah Groves told 10,000-plus teens gathered for the opening session of the July 1-4 National Acteens Convention (NAC) in Louisville, Ky.

Groves, youth consultant for the Southern Baptist Woman's Missionary Union (WMU) and a key organizer of the event, was referring not only to what would happen inside the Kentucky Fair and Exposition Center, but also to the impact the girls would make across Louisville and southern Indiana through four sessions of service projects.

On Thursday and Friday, the 10,315 teens and leaders fanned out across the area to clean up local parks and recreation areas, minister to children and senior adults, clean and paint ministry centers and perform a variety of other volunteer ministries at 220 sites.

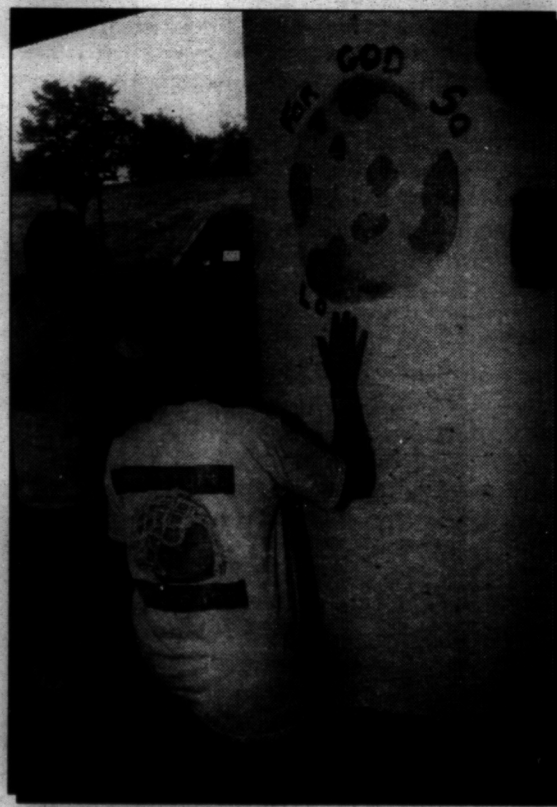
Outside the exposition center, NAC participants received high marks.

"They've done an excellent job," said Randall Harvey, director of Jefferson Street Baptist Center in downtown Louisville. "I've been very impressed with their work ethic. They've gotten more done than we expected."

About 200 girls worked at Jefferson Street Baptist Center during the two-day period, cleaning and painting the building that houses a long-standing ministry to Louisville's homeless.

Renee Bryant, director of Fern Creek/Highview United Ministries Inc., said the young women reminded her of when she was an Acteen in Irving, Texas. Workers

cleaned, painted and sorted food for the food pantry at the center, which offers assistance to individuals and families.



OFF WITH THE BAD — Replacing gang graffiti with Christian graffiti was one of the off-site ministries 100 Acteens were assigned to during the four rotations of National Acteens Convention. Clara Utley (kneeling) from First Church, Lewisville, Texas, left behind a message from John 3:16. (WMU photo by Stephen Peek)

"Hopefully through the conference as well as the mission projects they'll see how volunteer mission projects really help the community," she said.

That was precisely the goal of organizing the thousands of hands-on ministry opportunities, said Julie Keith, Acteens consultant for Kentucky WMU and coordinator of the ministry projects conducted during NAC.

"That was our whole intent, for people to come here and see needs and how to meet them and then go home and see needs and meet them," she said.

As an example, Keith cited the 40,000 items Acteens donated for the Infant Resource Project, a Louisville ministry center that works with low-income mothers to provide basic necessities for children age three and younger.

Many girls who worked sorting the donated good for mothers and babies said they would like to go home and help start a similar effort.

Cathy Neel, director of the Infant Resource Project, received several invitations to come help NAC participants do just that in their home churches, she said.

Neel also said the effects of NAC on Louisville will be long-lasting.

"A year from now when I fill an order I still will remember NAC," she said.

Not having to round up these items from other sources will free her time for other priorities, such as fund-raising and parenting projects.

Overall, the ministry projects were the highlight of NAC for many participants, Keith said. "They loved it."

Seminary chorus serenades biker church

FORT WORTH, Texas (BP) — Tuxedos among a sea of black leather. Cars and Harleys in the parking lot. Clean-cut haircuts outnumbered by ponytails and long beards. A precisely planned music program blended with an open, spontaneous congregation.

Two cultures, one church.

For the Southwestern Seminary men's chorus, the last-minute addition of Church in the Wind — a biker church started by Gary Davis with regular services on Friday night — became the most memorable stop on its spring tour.

"My first impression when I heard they were coming?" pastor Davis asks through a boisterous laugh. "Oh boy, tuxes and high church, this will be a real eye-opener for them. Our idea of dressing up is wearing a shirt with buttons on it."

The praise band of Church in the Wind opened the service. "They have a different type of service," Tommy Rowel, a member of the men's chorus, recounted. "They have a loose format, people are in and out."

After the praise band, the men's chorus performed songs such as "Amazing Grace" and "Holy, Holy, Holy" with precision and passion that years of practice and training have produced.

Some members of Church in the Wind heard many of the treasured classic hymns for the first time.

The joint worship helped break down walls. "I saw a small boy come in with a lady. He had patches over his eyes," said chorus member Grady Chism.

"I found out later he and his sister were playing the day before and she accidentally sprayed hair spray in his eyes. They didn't know at the time if he would regain his sight."

"He listened through the entire concert with a big smile on his face. After the concert I had the opportunity to befriend him and we had our picture made together."

"He said that if he was able to see again he wanted to know what I looked like."

"The men's chorus allowed our people to get a taste of traditional church and get over some of their fears of it," Davis said.

"Many of our

people don't feel comfortable in a regular church. They (people in traditional churches) wear coats and ties and flowery dresses; we wear leather jackets and T-shirts, jeans and boots."

"The crossing of cultures showed how people can worship Christ together no matter what they wear."

The performance was followed by a time of fellowship, and a few motorcycle rides.

"One of the most exciting moments of the night was riding with the pastor on his Harley," Rowel said. "Me in a tux and him in his biker outfit with his ponytail."

Pastor Davis said that in 1982, "the Spirit first gave me the idea for the church ... We had just moved into town and went to a swap meet. I looked around and saw a whole bunch of people who needed Jesus. My wife thought I was crazy."

Through the next decade, Davis said he dragged his feet and put the idea for a biker church on the back burner.

The first attempts to bring the church off the back burner came in 1996. "I was at Riverside Church and asked if they used the chapel on Friday nights," Davis said.

Riverside caught the vision to start a church for bikers and supported the efforts.

That October, a barbecue and rally were held to promote the new church. On Nov. 1, Church in the Wind held its first service with about 50 people in attendance.

The church has held regular services on Friday nights ever since.

"I've been asked, 'Why Friday nights?' and I explain that there are many rides and rallies for bikers on Sunday morning, as well as (bikers) just taking a ride," Davis said.

On the Friday the men's chorus rode into town, a lasting impression was made on those in leather and those in tuxedos.

"It was hard to leave, very hard to leave," Chism said.

CBF endorses Mississippi chaplain

HOUSTON (ABP) — Capt. James Harwood, assigned to the U.S. Navy Chief of Chaplains Office in Washington, D.C., has become the first military chaplain endorsed by the Cooperative Baptist Fellowship (CBF).

Besides Harwood, a 25-year Navy veteran, other military chaplains endorsed were Navy Cmdr. James Pope, an 18-year veteran based in Point Mugu, Calif.; Navy Lt. Cmdr. Thomas McGathy, a 14-year veteran based in San Diego; and Eric Smith, a first lieutenant in the U.S. Army Reserves in Ft. Worth.

The Council on Endorsement also approved Robert Randolph, chaplain at the Juvenile Evaluation Center of the North Carolina Division of Youth Services, Swannanoa, N.C. He is a native of Asheville, N.C.

Smith, a native of Florida who grew up in Mississippi, currently works in Fort Worth as a case manager for Tarrant County mental health and retardation services and as a bivocational chaplain at a nursing home.



Unidentified chorus member, Davis and new biker buddy

NOBTS to revamp D.Min program

NEW ORLEANS (BP) — A totally revised doctor of ministry (D.Min.) degree program is in place for fall 1998 enrollment at New Orleans Seminary (NOBTS), while work is beginning on a new doctor of educational ministry (DEM) degree.

The seminary's revised D.Min. program, approved by trustees in March, is fully accredited. The program incorporates a combination of seminars, an internship under supervision, a field project and a written report. Features include:

- a student-driven specialization option. "The greatest improvement in our newly redesigned D.Min. program is to allow students great flexibility in specializing in the areas of ministry to which they feel called," said Steve Lemke, seminary provost. "Our goal is to have a specialized course of study particularly applicable to each student's ministry."

"The diversity of ministry today has called for more options with regard to specializations," said Jim Shaddix, director of the NOBTS D. Min. program. "Because of the practical nature of the D.Min. degree, we want the content of the program to be as relevant to contemporary ministry as it possibly can be."

- a flexible campus structure. Because of NOBTS' extension center campus system and the seminary's use of compressed interactive video (CIV), students in the D.Min. program have the option of taking classes at any of four locations: New Orleans, Orlando, Atlanta, and Graceville, Fla., with more sites to be added as the seminary continues to broaden its CIV network.

Only a minimum of course work must be taken on the main campus.

- simplified application process. "Our new D.Min. program has a simplified admissions process which removes unnecessary hoops to jump through, making it easier than ever to complete admission," Lemke said.

- a flexible schedule. "To be in the D.Min. program, students must be in some type of full-time ministry, which obviously puts limits on their schedules, besides family responsibilities," Shaddix said. "Keeping that fact in mind, our program was set up with limited on-campus time required, and we are implementing all of our distance-learning tools available."

The new program entails six required seminars, with three of the six seminars set up as

directed study, using the seminary's Internet access and e-mail with professors to complete course work.

- an affordable degree. "Southern Baptist seminary education is the best bargain available today," Shaddix said. "The SBC's Cooperative Program substantially underwrites the cost of educating Southern Baptists, allowing for an affordable and excellent preparation for ministry."

- a director, Shaddix, and assistant director, Charles Harvey Jr., who each completed D.Min. degrees at Southern Baptist seminaries while in full-time ministry. "Our backgrounds will allow us to be sensitive to the real-life situations our students will encounter while involved in full-time ministry and pursuing post-graduate studies," Shaddix said. "Our experience should provide additional confidence to the students to know there are people here who believe in the degree enough to have completed one."

Application forms are available on the seminary's Internet web site at nobts.edu or by calling the student enlistment office at 1-800-NOBTS-01, ext. 3323.

'HealthQuest' set for Aug. 8 at Baptist Medical Center

Baptist Health Systems, Inc. (BHS) of Jackson will host "HealthQuest," a family-oriented health and wellness fair, on Aug. 8 at the Baptist Medical Center at 1225 State Street in Jackson.

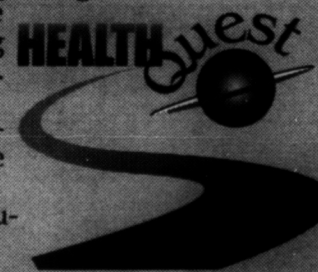
The free event, sponsored by BHS and WLBT TV-3 in Jackson, will be held from 10 a.m.-2 p.m., beginning in The Colonnades, the new medical office building at Baptist, and continuing through the hospital's first floor. Planned activities include:

- Free child immunizations in conjunction with the Mississippi State Department of Health.
- Bernard's Birthday Party, an annual event to introduce children to the medical center's puppet mascot.
- Reunion of children who have been patients in the medical center's Neonatal Intensive Care unit.
- Health screenings for cholesterol, blood pressure, glucose, and fitness.
- Tours of Baptist's heart, birthplace, and cancer treatment facilities.
- Displays from health-related organizations.
- "Pack the Van" contest to promote child safety seat usage.
- Educational sessions on health topics.
- Refreshments.

Door prizes will be given away throughout the day, including back-to-school shopping trips to Metrocenter Mall in Jackson.

Parking for HealthQuest will be available in The Colonnades parking lot on the north side of the medical center. Registration is encouraged.

For more information and to register, call the Baptist Health Line at (601) 948-6262.



NAMES IN THE NEWS



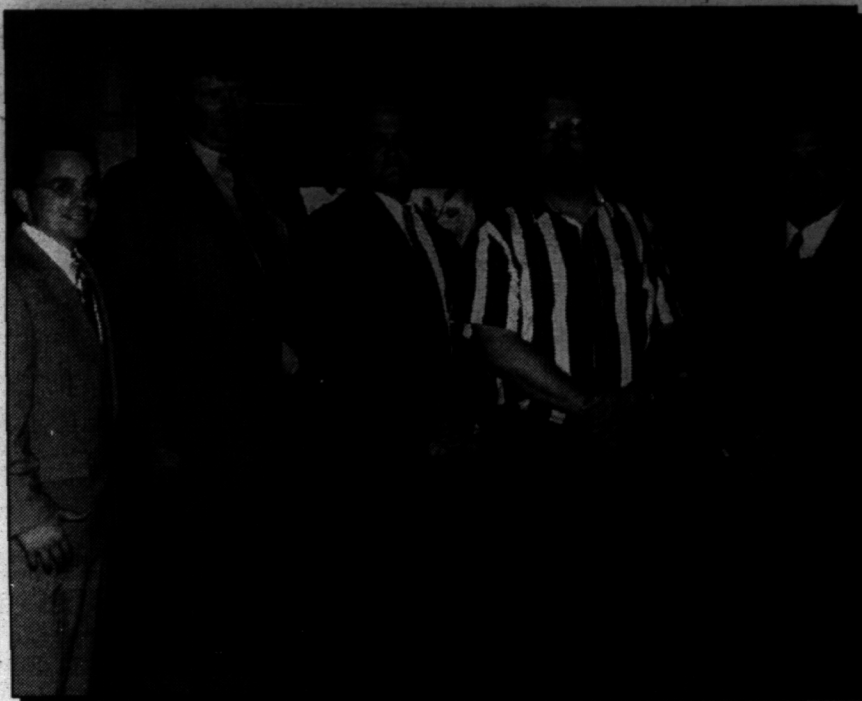
YOU CAN RESPOND RIGHT NOW!

Simply share the following prayer with God in your own words:

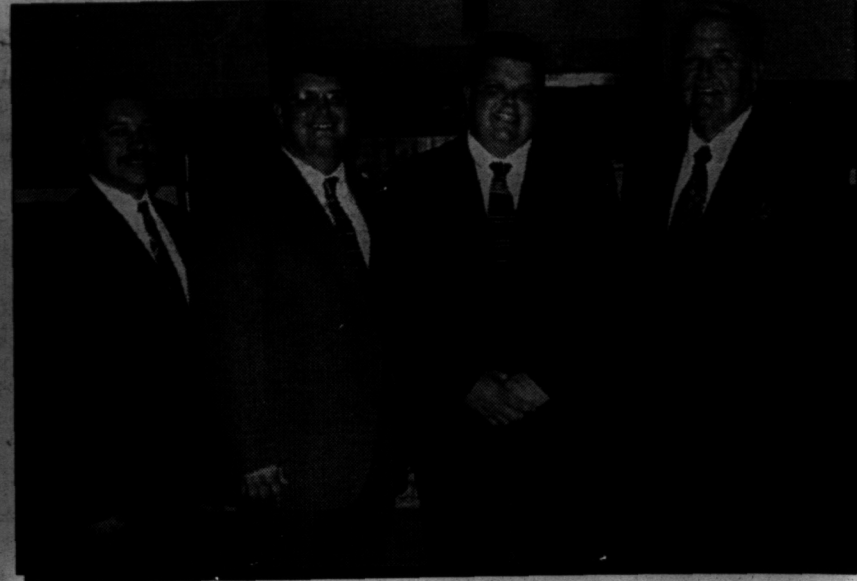
1. Lord, I admit that I need you. *(I have sinned.)*
2. I want forgiveness for my sins and freedom from eternal death. *(I repent.)*
3. I believe Jesus died and rose from the grave to forgive my sins and to restore my relationship with you. *(I believe in Jesus.)*
4. By faith, I invite Jesus Christ into my life. From this time on, I want to live in a loving relationship with him. *(I receive Christ as my Savior and Lord.)*

But as many as received him, to them he gave the right to become children of God, even to those who believe in his name (John 1:12).

If you make a decision for Jesus Christ today, contact a local Baptist church for spiritual guidance.



Bentonia Church, Bentonia, held deacon ordination services on June 21. Pictured (from left) are Cliff Pace, pastor; Gerald Creel; Kim Sligh; David Osborne; and Griff Irwin.



West Ripley Church, Ripley, ordained three men to the ministry on May 31. They are (from left) Ron Norrell, associate pastor and minister of youth at West Ripley Church; Jonathan Baker, minister of youth at Pleasant Hill Church, New Albany; Michael Baker, minister of youth and college age, Pine Grove Church, Hickory Flat; and Bill Baker, father of Michael and Jonathan Baker and pastor of West Ripley Church.

NOBTS offers training opportunity in Mississippi

Students may register now at six locations throughout Mississippi for Church Leadership Certificate Program classes offered through New Orleans Seminary.

Courses begin Aug. 24 with registration taking place the first day of class. A one-time application fee of \$25 is required and each course is \$75.

Classes meet two hours one evening each week Aug. 24-Oct. 12 at locations in Jackson, Columbus, Purvis, Meridian, McComb, and Booneville.

"Hymnology" (Jimmy McCaleb) and "Baptist Doctrine" (Odean Puckett) will be taught at the Jackson Center, Broadmoor Baptist Church, Jackson, 7-9 p.m.

"Hymnology" (James

Hayes) and "Baptist Doctrine" (Ken Rhodes) will be taught at the Purvis Center, First Baptist Church, Purvis, 6:30-8:30 p.m.

"Hymnology" (Buddy McElroy) will be taught at the Meridian Center, Northcrest Baptist Church, Meridian, 6:30-8:30 p.m.

"Hymnology" (Joe Elliott) will be taught at the McComb Center, East McComb Baptist

Church, McComb, 7-9 p.m.

"Hymnology" (LuAnn Ford) and "Baptist Doctrine" (Lynn Jones) will be taught at the Booneville Center, First Baptist Church, Booneville, 7-9 p.m.

"Hymnology" (Ed Nix), "Baptist Doctrine" (Doug Warren), and "New Testament Survey: The Life of Christ" (Bill Duncan) will be taught at the Columbus Center, First Baptist Church and the associ-

ational office, 7-9 p.m.

The Church Leadership Certificate Program is designed to train laypersons to serve as part-time education or music ministers or pastors.

For more information, contact Chester Vaughn, 268 Northpointe Pkwy., Jackson, MS 39211-2412; or call (601) 956-6285, or call the College of Undergraduate Studies at (504) 282-4455, ext. 3590.

BAPTIST COLLEGE NEWS

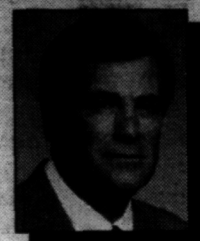


Lewis and Margie (Loustalot) Myrick Sr. have made William Carey College (WCC) recipient of a \$250,000 life insurance policy. The Myricks share a history with Carey through their family owned business, Economy Supply. Carey has purchased building materials from Economy since the store opened in 1941. Pictured (from left) are Larry Kennedy, WCC interim president; Margie Myrick, and Lewis Myrick.

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DOM, Pearl River



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Arlington Heights
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Frank Gunn
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Kiely Young
First Baptist Church
Gulfport

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VICE PRESIDENT

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Covenant Ministerial Fellowship

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JUST FOR THE RECORD



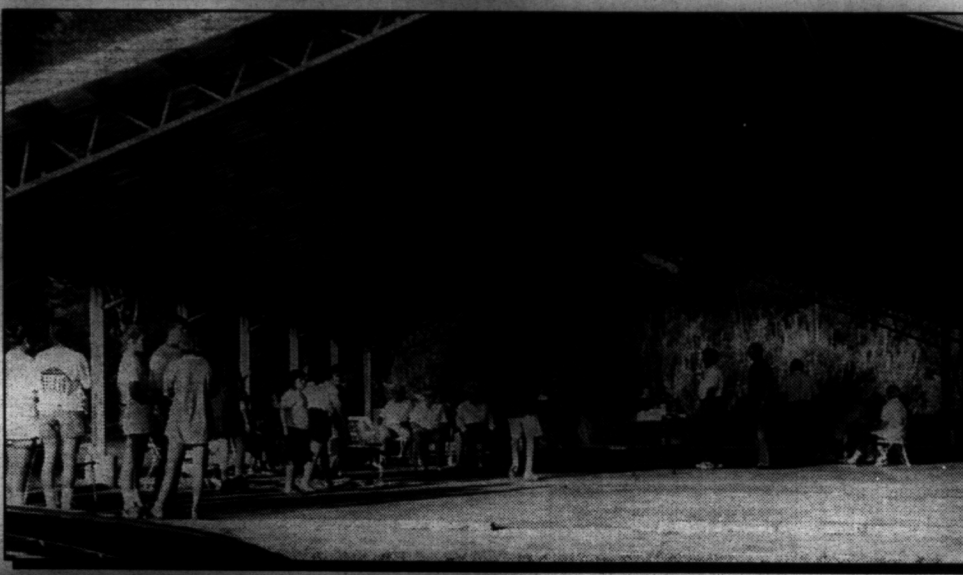
Thirty-three members of Carroll-Montgomery Association recently traveled to Northgate Southern Baptist Church in Beckley, W. Va. The construction crew helped build a new sanctuary. The other members held four sessions of Back-Yard Bible School each day. They also, presented Lawrence Stewart, pastor, with a check for \$1,000 from the churches in their association to help with construction cost.

Lena Church, Lena, will hold its 150th anniversary celebration on Aug. 2. Services will begin at 10:30 a.m. with a fellowship dinner to follow. For more information call (601) 654-8822.

First Church, Magee, will celebrate its 100th anniversary on Aug. 16. Schedule of events includes worship service, 11 a.m.; lunch at noon; and 2 p.m. service. Kevin K. Hand is pastor.

Calvary Church, Greenville, will celebrate its 50th anniversary on Aug. 2. Activities will include morning services and a potluck lunch in fellowship hall followed by a time of singing, testimonies, sharing, and remembering. J. B. Miller, former pastor, will be the guest speaker. David Lee is pastor.

Higher Faith will be in concert at New Zion Church, Crystal Springs, on Aug. 1 at 7 p.m.



Heucks Retreat Church, Brookhaven, held a dedication service on July 5 for its new pavilion. Ken Kirk is pastor.



Thirty Eighth Avenue Church, Hattiesburg, held a service of dedication for its new Allen MDS 36 organ on July 12. Three organists were featured during the service. They were Jeff McLelland, professor of organ at Mississippi College; Kathy Vail, organist for First Church, Hattiesburg; and Jeremy Adcock, organist at Thirty Eighth Avenue Church. A memorial plaque was presented to the church, listing those honored or memorialized by gifts to the organ fund. The organ is free of debt. Pictured (from left) are Dana Rice, minister of music; Adcock; Vail (seated); and McLelland. Wiley Abel is pastor.



Youth of Bassfield Church, Bassfield, recently attended Centrifuge at Carson-Newman College in Jefferson City, Tenn. Pictured (from left) are Alison Ivonio, Alesha Little, Lori Green, Kathryn Saulter, Alex Broome, Dustin Beasley, Adam Ivonio, and Nathan White. The youth were accompanied by Mitizi Bullock and Troy Miles.

REVIVAL DATES

Macedonia, Meridian: Aug. 2-5; Sunday, 11 a.m. and 6 p.m.; Mon.-Wed., 7 p.m.; Malcolm Lewis, Meridian, evangelist; Travis Watkins, Lake, music; Jason C. Gross, pastor.

Harmony, Crystal Springs: Aug. 2-6; 7 p.m. nightly; Kara Blackard, Corinth, evangelist; Les Fox, Harmony Church, music; Clark Stewart, pastor.

Holcomb (North Central): Aug. 2-5; Sunday, 11 a.m. and 6 p.m.; Mon.-Wed., 7:30 p.m.; Dale Ellenberg, Mid-America Seminary, evangelist; Greg Childress, Millington, Tenn., music; Randy Ashley, pastor.

Chester (Choctaw): Aug. 2-5; Sunday, 11 a.m. and 7 p.m.; Mon.-Wed., 10:30 a.m. and 7 p.m.; Dwight Sibley, Vicksburg, evangelist; Joe Styron, Vaiden, music; Philip Cooper, pastor.

Double Springs, Maben: Aug. 2-7; Sunday, 7 p.m.; Mon.-Fri., 10 a.m. and 7 p.m.; Rueben "Lucky" Teague, preaching; John S. Foles, pastor.

Montgomery, Summit: Aug. 2-5; homecoming; Johnny Adams, preaching; 9:45 a.m., Sunday School; 11 a.m., worship; dinner on the grounds, noon; 1 p.m., Obadiah Concert; 2 p.m., Gary Dennis; revival, Mon.-Wed., 7 p.m.; Gary Dennis, evangelist; Randy and Janice Carruth, music; Bill Miller, pastor.

Immanuel, Vicksburg: Aug. 30-Sept. 2; Sunday, 6 p.m.; Mon.-Wed., 7 p.m.; Danny Lanier, Little Rock, evangelist; Billy Brumfield, pastor.

Calvary, Natchez: Aug. 2-5; Sunday, 11 a.m. and 5 p.m.; Mon.-Wed., 7 p.m.; Tony Monk, Vicksburg, evangelist; Lisa Monk, special music; Mike Harrigill, pastor.

Lollars Grove, Eupora: Aug. 2-5; Sunday, 6:30 p.m.; Mon.-Wed., 7 p.m.; Gary Jackson, Sturgis, evangelist; Steve and Becky Carver, Mathiston, of One Way Ministries, music; Harvie Jackson, pastor.

Juniper Grove (Pearl River): Aug. 9-14; Sunday, homecoming; 7 p.m. nightly; Tommy Brill, Pascagoula, evangelist; Ray Spence, pastor.

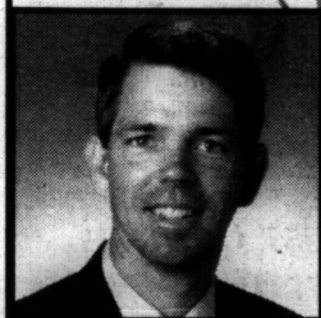
Bethesda (Golden Triangle): Aug. 9-14; Sunday, 11 a.m. and 7 p.m.; Mon.-Fri., 7 p.m.; Michael Duff, Springfield, Tenn., evangelist; Joe and Ceal Pate, Kosciusko, music; James R. Hutcherson, pastor.

Hickory (Newton): Aug. 16-21; 7 p.m.; different speakers each night include Sonny Adkins, Kevin Meador, Bob Sanderson, Ralph Buckley, Danny Lanier, and David Grumbach; Rodney Anderson, pastor.

Mt. Horeb, Collins: Aug. 2-5; Sunday, 11 a.m., followed by dinner on the grounds, and 6 p.m.; Mon.-Wed., 7 p.m.; Cliff Estes, Shreveport, La., evangelist; Jon McCartney, Lucedale, music; Shannon D. Marshall, pastor.

Macedonia, Petal: Aug. 2-5; Sunday, 10 a.m. and 6 p.m.; Mon.-Wed., 7 p.m.; John "Bull" Bramlett, Memphis, guest speaker; Lee Gordon, West Point, music; L. H. McCollough, interim pastor.

Colonial Heights Baptist Church presents



David Barton
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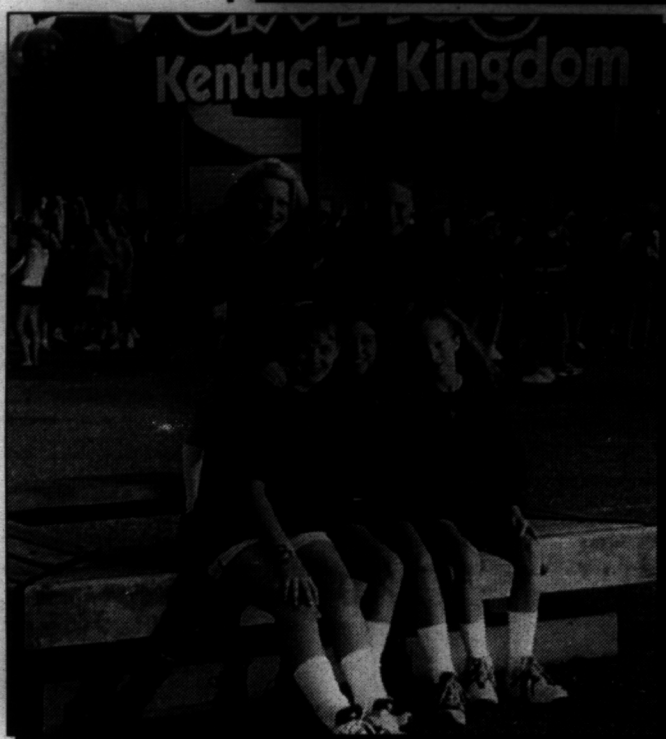
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First Church, Greenwood Acteens

Acteens from First Church, Greenwood, attended the National Acteen Convention (NAC) in Louisville, Ky., July 1-4. They were involved in ministry projects such as cleanup, painting, repairing, working with child relief centers, working with elderly centers, and also prayer ministry abroad the steamboat "Spirit of Jefferson" on the Ohio River. Each person attending was responsible for bringing at least one baby care item and two pieces of cotton fabric to participate in making quilts for the homeless and abused. In all, 33,000 baby care items were collected for the child relief center and over 1,200 quilts were made by the Acteens and leaders for the abused/homeless centers. Pictured (from left, seated) are Memrie McCaleb, Crystal Lee Fleming, Sherry Thomas;

(standing) Casie Burt, Anna Miller. Beth Aden, leader, was not pictured. (See pg. 4 for related story.)

Macedonia Church, Union County, recently crowned four Acteens as queens. They were Hailey Davis, Amanda Fitzgerald, B r a n d y Windham, and A m a n d a Collinsworth. The GAs were also recognized. Acteens leaders are Martha Owen and Shirley Shirley. Bill Foley is pastor.



Robinhood Church, Brandon, had 100% attendance in the Willing Workers Senior Adult Ladies Sunday School class on July 12. Pictured (front row) are Elizabeth Williams, Josie Patrick, Irene Christman; (second row) Lozene Harrell, Maggie Hawthorne, Eva Christman, La Fayne Tucker, Betres McComb, Jena Covey, Mae Stewart, Pauline Davis, teacher, and Freddie Kees.

CenturyMen travel to Brazil

The CenturyMen (100 men ministering toward a new century) will be leaving for a mission tour to Brazil on Aug. 3-20. The choral group, under the direction of Beryl Red, will present 10 major concerts in seven cities of Brazil. Two of the men from Mississippi who will be on this mission trip are James Hayes, retired minister of music from First Church, Hattiesburg, and Raymond Ball, minister of music from Highland Colony Church, Ridgeland.

Little Bahala, Lincoln: Aug. 9; Sunday School, 10 a.m.; worship, 11 a.m.; noon meal in fellowship hall; singing in afternoon; D. Scott Willingham, Dumas, Texas, preaching; Tom and Willa Moak, music; revival, Aug. 10-14, services at 6:30 p.m.; Wayne Gray, pastor.

Whitesand, Prentiss: Aug. 9; 10:30 a.m.; lunch following morning services; Burley Bridges, guest speaker; George G. Aultman, interim pastor.

Sunrise, Petal: Aug. 2; 11 a.m.; covered dish in fellowship hall, noon; Gerald

Aultman, Hattiesburg, guest speaker; Bob Thames, guest singer; revival, Aug. 3-5; Aultman, evangelist; Thames, music.

Linn, Doddsville: Aug. 2; Sunday School, 10 a.m.; worship, 11 a.m.; Artie Nute, guest speaker; covered dish lunch in fellowship hall; Charles Jones, pastor.

Barefoot Springs, Pelahatchie: Aug. 2; services, 10:30 a.m.; dinner on the grounds; Ned Barrett, former pastor, preaching; Joe Stovall, pastor.

Walnut, Walnut: Aug. 16; Sunday School, 10 a.m.; worship, 11 a.m.; covered dish lunch; singing by The Southland Quartet of Walnut, 1:30 p.m.; Samuel Cox, pastor.

Pleasant Hill, Bogue Chitto: Aug. 2; Floyd F. Higginbotham, pastor, will preach at the 11 a.m. worship service; lunch at noon; 1:30 p.m. service will feature the Cornestone Quartet from Port Gibson.

Shiloh, Oxford: Aug. 2; 10:30 a.m.; covered dish, noon; 1 p.m. singing, Walk by Faith, Randolph, group singers; Randy Smith, guest speaker; Ronnie Mayes, interim pastor.

Magees Creek, Walthall: Aug. 9; 160th anniversary; Sunday School, 9:45 a.m.; worship, 10:45 a.m.; covered dish in fellowship hall, noon; 1:15 p.m. singing; Hosanna in the Highest, Magee, singers; John Purvis, Morton, former pastor, guest speaker; revival, Aug. 10-12; David Millican, evangelist; Justin Morgan, pastor.

MISSIONARY NEWS

Jeffrey D. and Glenda G. Renaas Haglund were among 53 people appointed by the International Mission Board July 21 during a service at Bon Air Church in Richmond, Va.

The Haglunds will work in Ukraine. Ukraine, with more than 50 million people in population, has the strongest and largest Baptist union in

Europe and the former Soviet Union. He will work as volunteer coordinator and a Theological Education by Extension (TEE) instructor. She will be involved in a variety of outreach ministries.

The Haglunds

Jeffrey Haglund, son of Paul and Ruth Haglund of Destin, Fla., considers North Oxford Church in Oxford, his home church.

He is a graduate of Calvin College in Grand Rapids, Mich.; Mankato (Minn.) State University; University of Mississippi; and Midwestern Seminary in Kansas City, Mo.

Since 1995 he has been youth minister at Tryst Falls Church



in Kearney, Mo.

Glenda Haglund, daughter of Rodney and Joy Renaas of Nunda, S.D., considers North Oxford Church her home church.

She is a graduate of South Dakota State University in Brookings and Mankato State University.

She was a speech and language pathologist for Oxford Public Schools.

The Haglunds have one child, Jedidiah Paul, born in 1998.

MS POSITIONS AVAILABLE

WANTED: MINISTER OF MUSIC AND PIANIST. Small church, 1 service weekly. Chapel Hill Baptist Church, 1126 Boyd Road, Utica, MS 39175. (601) 829-1853.

MINISTER OF MUSIC AND YOUTH sought by small town church. Send resumes to Randy Thompson c/o Pelahatchie Baptist Church, PO Box. 355, Pelahatchie, MS 39145.

FULL-TIME YOUTH - MUSIC MINISTER. Housing provided. Send resume to Philadelphia Baptist Church, 3646 Highway 550 NW, Wesson, MS 39191.

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RATE: 50 cents per word, \$5 minimum. Cash with order except on contract advertising. Include name, address, zip code, and phone number in word count. No blind ads. ONLY WRITTEN ADS ACCEPTED.

WANTED: PASTOR OF MEMBERSHIP AND MINISTRY for non-traditional, vision-driven church in rapidly growing community. Send resumes to: Crosspoint Baptist, 14965 Airline Hwy., Baton Rouge, LA 70817.

FULL-TIME MINISTER OF YOUTH AND EDUCATION sought by Tioga First Baptist, Pineville, La. Send resumes to: David Cranford, pastor, P.O. Box 518, Tioga, LA 71477; fax: (318) 640-4535; e-mail: tiogafirstbaptist@compuserve.com.

CHOIR ROBES & accessories, pulpit/judicial robes, paraments. MURPHY ROBES/Mac's Robes, Charles McGlocklin, Authorized Dealer. Statewide 1-800-898-MACS.

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PARADISE LANES: Mississippi's only smoke and alcohol free Bowling Center. Call about Lock-in, group rates, fund raisers, and leagues. Located at 820 Cooper Road, Jackson, MS (601) 372-7700.

NAMES IN THE NEWS



Monument Drive Church, Tupelo, licensed Scott Tackett to the ministry. Tackett graduated from Itawamba Community College and attended Mississippi State University. Pictured with Tackett (left) is his father, Tommy Tackett, pastor of Monument Drive Church.



Heuck's Retreat Church, Brookhaven, recently licensed Thad Owens Jr. and Thomas Murry to the ministry. Each is available for supply preaching and may be contacted through the church at (601) 835-1821. Pictured (from left) are Murry and Owens.

VBS RESULTS

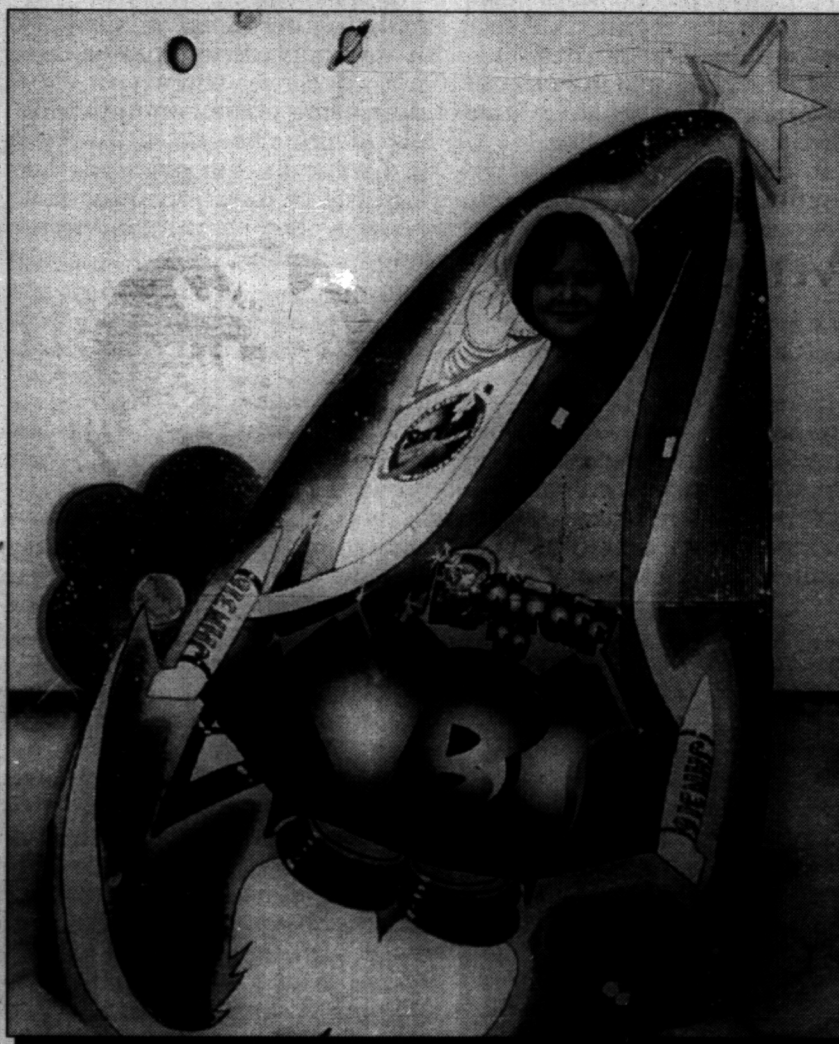


Faith Church, Jackson, held its first VBS in June. Thirty-seven children attended with three professions of faith. Pictured are members who worked with the children during VBS.

Chester (Choctaw): June 1-5; total enrollment, 200; average attendance, 151; five salvation decisions; Philip Cooper, pastor.

First Church, Coldwater, averaged 170 bed babies through sixth

graders in Vacation Bible School. The children gave 490 pounds of coins which totaled \$1,571.78. The total amount was sent to the local BSU to help students lead VBS with two of its International Mission Board missionaries.



Antioch Church, Alcorn Association, had 74 children enrolled in Vacation Bible School the week of May 25. Clarence Hendricks, pastor, spoke to each class on Thursday about the plan of salvation and asked each child to search his heart. On Friday over a two hour time span the pastor dealt with each of the 15 children who prayed to receive the Lord. Melody Hendricks, VBS director, placed a hole in the shuttle display in order to take pictures of each of the children enrolled in VBS.

Staff changes

Hickory Church, Newton Association, has called Gary Dover as minister of music effective Aug. 2. A native of Indianola, Dover received his education at Belmont College, Nashville, Tenn. His previously place of service was Grace Memorial Church, Gulfport.

Arrowood Church, Meridian, has elected Lamar Callahan, former song leader, as interim music director. Thomas J. Wood has also been elected as interim pastor. Sunday services are 11 a.m. and 6 p.m.

Andy Cummings has resigned as minister of music at First Church, Columbus, to join the staff of First Church, Grenada, effective July 31.

Bass tourney set for August

First Annual Mississippi Bass Tournament will be held on Aug. 14 and 15. "This event has been designed as an evangelistic tool for reaching lost and unchurched people in our state. Participants are encouraged to bring a lost or unchurched friend as their fishing partner," said Jim Didlake, consultant, Brotherhood Department, Mississippi Baptist Convention Board (MBCB).

The pre-tourney fellowship will be Friday, Aug. 14, at First Church, Moss Point, beginning at 7 p.m. Jim S. Philips, pastor of North Greenwood Church, Greenwood, and a professional Bass fisherman will be the speaker. Blast off will be 6 a.m., Saturday, Aug 15, at the River Front Boat Launch in Moss Point. Trophies or prizes will be awarded for the top ten teams. Cost for the event is \$40 per team.

For further information, contact the Evangelism Department or the Brotherhood Department, MBCB at 1-800-748-1651.

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SINCE 1953

Historian: states changing denomination

Annuity Board sets record

DALLAS (BP) — Net income of \$626 million in the first six months of 1998 topped any previous record for the first half of a year for the Annuity Board of the Southern Baptist Convention.

The income was \$163.1 million greater than the previous high for the January-June period in 1997. Earnings on investment funds, coupled with \$146.8 million in new contributions by participants, swelled total assets of the board to \$6.969 billion on June 30.

O.S. Hawkins, president of the agency that provides retirement, relief, and insurance programs for Southern Baptist churches and institutions, said, "It is exciting to report investment successes for God's choice servants. While historical trends indicate the tremendous earnings rates of recent years may not be sustainable over the long term, we intend to be positioned to serve our participants well no matter what the market conditions."

Personal accounting statements and LifePoints Quarterly, an educational newsletter, will be mailed to each participant at the end of July.

HOUSTON (ABP) — Actions within the Texas and Virginia Baptist state conventions are changing the context of the Southern Baptist denomination, historian Bill Leonard told 900 participants at a recent Texas Baptists Committed banquet in Houston.

Leonard, a native Texan and noted analyst of American church history, is dean of the Wake Forest University Divinity School in Winston-Salem, N.C.

"Virginia produced the first official schism in the controversy, with that state now split between two separate organizations, both recognized by the national Southern Baptist Convention (SBC)," he said.

Southern Baptist Conservatives of Virginia split off from the longstanding Baptist General Association of Virginia, claiming closer allegiance to the SBC.

"A second schism looms in Texas," Leonard said.

Southern Baptists of Texas, a split-off counterpart to the new Virginia group, has announced it will form a convention separate from the Baptist General Convention of Texas (BGCT).

The pending split in Texas has been blamed on what Leonard called the "Texas Solution."

It includes a vote in 1994 redefining the Cooperative Program unified budget so that affiliated churches may use it

as a channel of support to Baptist groups outside the SBC.

It also includes a set of recommendations, approved last year, that will enable the Texas convention to do several tasks previously assigned solely to the national convention.

Leonard said the Texas action is particularly significant for several reasons.

"First, because of the numbers involved," he said. "Texas Baptists number almost 3 million persons, roughly one-fifth of the SBC itself. Thus, the changes ... go a long way to making the BGCT the ninth-largest denomination in the United States."

"Second, these changes reflect a general trend among American religious groups to promote regionalism and localism ahead of national denominational alignments."

"Third, the actions come at a time when American religion itself is in a state of permanent transition. Old ways of organizing religious communities — specifically the denominational systems — are realigning, re-forming, reconnecting and, in some cases, collapsing."

Although denominations are not defunct, they provide decreasing impact on individuals' identity, he said.

Leonard urged Texas Baptists to focus on three key areas as they chart their course into the future:

Identity

"Articulating an identity — what it means to be Baptist — is a formidable task in these days," he acknowledged. "Historically, ... denominations helped new converts know who they were and who they were not, religiously speaking."

From his boyhood in Decatur, Texas, Leonard recounted shapers of Baptist identity, such as the King James Bible, a common Sunday School lesson and "an envelope in which you placed the weekly tithe and listed your Christian devotion in a six-point system." He also recalled key worship and social differences between his BGCT-affiliated congregation and the Fundamental, Independent Baptist church in town.

"Today, that Baptist system that nurtured many of us is going, going, gone. And the question looms large: What Baptist identity will we pass on to new generations?"

Attempts to define that identity must be creative, not simply "the old traditions, structures and forms of piety," he said.

Polity

"An important element of the Texas re-formation involves Baptist polity — what it means to be together in specific Christian community," Leonard said.

"The 'Texas Solution' ... illustrates modifications in polity and a return to the older society method of church cooperation," he said. Before Baptists organized conventions, they worked together in societies, "task-specific" organizations that enabled individuals, associations, and churches to fund such ministries as missions, publishing, education, and evangelism.

"These days, a de facto society method is apparent throughout Baptist life," he observed, noting Texas Baptist developments allow "society options in funding and missionary participation."

For example, "churches may decide to fund and participate in the Southern Baptist Convention, the state convention, the Cooperative Baptist Fellowship, the Baptist World Alliance and other entities," he said. "These entities, including the BGCT, are essentially clearinghouses, facilitating local churches, and regional gatherings."

Texas thus has a grand opportunity to model these changes in polity — a case study in Baptist reorganization and realignment toward a new century.

Theology

Despite 20 years of theological disputes, Baptists still need to engage in theological discussion, Leonard asserted.

"In the midst of the debates and derision of the last two decades, little serious theological dialogue has occurred," he said. "Theological discussion is messy, abrasive, exciting, dangerous, and absolutely necessary."

"What will it mean in Texas? Can we pursue theological conversation without the accusation, character assassination and diatribe that has characterized the last 20 years?"

Leonard suggested four specific topics for discussion and education: the Bible, Calvinism, conversion and baptism.

A resurgence of Calvinism in some segments of Southern Baptist life "opens doors to talk about election, free will, the atonement and the destiny of non-elect infants that call us to confront our basic theological orientations," Leonard said.

Evangelists called gift from God

SALT LAKE CITY (BP) — Full-time evangelists are a gift from God, but many Southern Baptist churches either ignore or avoid these itinerant ministers, contends Bob Pitman, pastor of Kirby Woods Church, Memphis, Tenn.

Speaking to the 40th annual Conference of Southern Baptist Evangelists in Salt Lake City's Salt Palace Convention Center

June 10, Pitman noted that figures from the North American Mission Board indicate that only 7,000 Southern Baptist congregations held revivals during 1997.

"Some say the day of revival is over. ... The Scriptures do not teach the day of revival is over. This is one of the greatest days for revival there ever has been," Pitman said.

Mike Osborne, evangelist from Petersburg, Va., acknowledged many evangelists suffer from struggles and pain.

"Every one of us in here could name folks who quit, ... who have said it's not worth the struggle anymore," Osborne said. "We need to strip away the masks and let God work in our lives."

Wayne Bristow, evangelist from Edmond, Okla., challenged the group to remember the importance of evangelistic preaching.

"Evangelistic preaching is not ... telling people what they want to hear, but it's telling people what they must hear," Bristow stated. "We come to declare good news, and that good news is embodied in the person of Jesus Christ."

Phil Glisson, evangelist from Memphis, Tenn., emphasized the importance of Christians acting like Jesus by being Spirit-filled, humble, patient, faithful and determined.

"Be determined that you will do what God wants you to do," Glisson urged. "Be determined that nothing will stop you. ... Pray and ask God to give you that spirit of determination in your heart — no matter what happens, no matter what comes, that you'll do what God wants you to do."


New officers for 1998-99 for the Conference of Southern Baptist Evangelists are president, Jerry Drace, Humboldt, Tenn.; vice president,

Mike Osborne, Petersburg, Va.; secretary-treasurer, Pamela Valle, Bedford, Texas; music director, Ken Holland, Franklin, Tenn.; assistant music director, Les Snyder, West Frankfort, Ill.; and parliamentarian, Larry Walker, Dallas.

Whites earn urn



John P. White, Sr. (seated at left) and wife Barbara (seated at right) of Clinton show off the Jane Pittman urn he won recently in a drawing held by the Mississippi Baptist Foundation during the Family Festival at Parkway Church, Clinton. Looking on are Jane Newell (standing at left), Foundation associate director, and Hal Fisher, Jr. (standing at right), Foundation director. (Photo by Carl M. White)



LifeAnswers

Ron Mumbower, Ph.D.
Minister of Counseling
First Church, Jackson

Life Answers is on hiatus due to a death in the author's family.

Send your counseling questions to LifeAnswers c/o The Baptist Record, P.O. Box 530, Jackson, MS 39205-0530. Please be brief. Name is not required. Remember: in time of crisis, your pastor can make recommendations on your counseling needs.

FAMILY BIBLE SERIES

Choose life-giving wisdom

Proverbs 8:1-11, 33-36

By Nancie E. Simmons

The heart is one of the most important organs in our body; it is the engine that runs the machine, so to speak. Without it we would not be alive.

Heart disease is a very common problem in my family's medical history. For this reason, I have to be very aware of what I eat and how I take care of myself.

Heart disease can be a silent killer. If a person takes for granted that their heart is healthy without watching eating habits and exercising, it could become clogged with cholesterol, causing more serious problems.

Many Christians today have heart problems also—spiritual

heart problems.

Many Christians are in great danger of a spiritual heart attack from the earthly cholesterol that clogs their heart. Just as cholesterol blocks the arteries of a human heart, earthly cholesterol blocks the flow of the relationship between God and us. This cholesterol causes them to miss out on God's life-giving wisdom, which cannot be understood without a clean heart.

Hear wisdom's call (8:1-5). Heart disease does not happen overnight. It is a gradual process of choosing not to exercise and choosing unhealthy foods.

In the same way spiritual heart disease does not happen overnight. We commit sins over



Simmons

a period time without asking forgiveness. These build up in our heart, damaging our relationship with Christ. Because of all the information available about heart disease, we can learn the proper way to take care of ourselves.

On the other hand, the best method to maintain a healthy spiritual heart is through God's wisdom. God's wisdom can be found in the Bible, at church, through other Christians, and in prayer if only we would look for it and have our hearts open to it.

Recognize wisdom's value (8:6-11). God made his plan simple. He did not structure it so only intelligent, scholarly people could understand it, but he made his plan so anyone could gain wisdom.

The key to this wisdom and understanding is a clean, pure heart that is given completely

to God. If you are unsure what God's wisdom is, are constantly struggling to understand the Bible, and are always missing the point of the preacher's sermon, you might want to have a little check-up on your spiritual heart health.

Some people may feel that having a healthy heart is an overwhelming task to achieve. They feel that there is no time for exercise and they do not want to give up the foods that they love.

This is also true with heart-sick Christians. There is no time for church involvement and they especially do not want to give up the sins that they love.

We all have sins that constantly trip us up and these could keep us from a healthy spiritual heart. If you want to find the strength to fight these sins, the power comes in knowing God's wisdom and understanding.

Heed wisdom's instructions (8:33-36). If we choose not to take care of our heart through

proper diet and exercise, then our bodies will eventually wear out and die.

This is also true with a person's spiritual heart. Those who choose "fatty" sins and lazy spiritual involvement are on the road to spiritual death because of a clogged relationship with God.

Make an appointment with God to have a spiritual check-up. Ask God's forgiveness for sins that you have committed and spend some time identifying areas in your life that need "toning."

Get your heart in good shape so you will be able to hear God's plans for your life and be able to hear his words of guidance. Choose life-giving wisdom through proper nutrition from the Bible and spiritual exercise so you will be guaranteed to live a full, healthy life.

Simmons teaches music at Harper McCaughan Elementary and is a member of First Church, Gulfport.

LIFE AND WORK

True of false security?

Jeremiah 1:1-3, 17-19; 2:12-13, 27-28; 5:30-31

By Kevin Hand

Mottos are important. Though few in words, they speak volumes about our beliefs. The official motto of the United States of America is "In God We Trust." This guiding principle appears in our national anthem, "The Star-Spangled Banner", and on our money. The motto appeared first on a two-cent piece in 1864, and in 1955, Congress required that it be inscribed on all U.S. currency. The motto is written on our money, but is it written on our hearts? Does our nation truly trust in God?

About 2,600 years ago, the prophet Jeremiah questioned the faithfulness of his nation of Judah. He pronounced judgment on his fellow citizens for

their many sins, especially the failure to trust God in both their private and national affairs.

Instead of trusting in God for their security, the people of Judah trusted in false gods, fortified cities, and the temple. Additionally, some people trusted in their own righteousness, deeds, riches, beauty, and fame.

In some ways, our world is like Jeremiah's. We live in tumultuous times and people seek security in a variety of sources. Some people have discovered that God provides the only real and lasting source of security. Others have placed their trust in such things as success, wealth, pleasure, themselves, their families, etc. Only



Hand

those who trust in God will find real security.

This month's five-lesson study theme, based on selected passages from the Book of Jeremiah, is designed to help people find true and lasting security in God. Our lesson this week deals with WHERE we can find security in a turbulent world.

A turbulent age (1:1-3). Jeremiah's ministry of almost 40 years was during the turbulent final days of Judah. His own life as God's prophet was in constant turmoil. He served from the final years of Josiah (627 B.C.) until the fall of Jerusalem under Zedekiah (587 B.C.). Josiah's short-lived reforms ended with his tragic death. His successors were evil and weak kings.

Each generation faces its own problems. We will encounter troubles and the storms of life will come our way. The rains will descend, the

wind will blow and beat upon us. We need a true source of strength and security.

Finding true security (1:17-19). When God called Jeremiah to be a prophet, God warned him of difficulties and opposition. God, however, told Jeremiah not to be afraid because he would provide him the strength and security to endure and overcome.

Even as God promised strength and ultimate security to Jeremiah, he promises the same to those who trust in him in our turbulent world. God is our Rock of Ages.

Folly of false security (2:12-13, 27-28). The Lord was appalled at the evils committed by the people of Judah. They had forsaken God, who was like a spring of living water, in exchange for false gods, which were like cisterns with holes in them. The people had placed their trust in visible sources of security, gods of wood and stone. God warned the people that

when they turned to their false gods for help in times of trouble, they would find no help.

People who place their hope for security in something or someone other than God need to recognize that their choice is sinful and foolish. Ultimately, these substitutes will fail to provide the security they sought.

Popularity of false security (5:30-31). God deplored the moral and spiritual plight of Judah. The prophets and priests were part of the problem, not the cure. The common people were complacent about the status quo.

Too many people, including some religious leaders, participate in and condone practices that lead people away from God and encourage them trust in things other than God. When people trust in anything or anyone except God for their security, it is folly. God alone provides real and lasting security.

Hand is pastor of First Church, Magee.

EXPLORE THE BIBLE

Being a Christian in the church

1 Peter 5

By William H. Sims, III

When Pompeii was destroyed by the eruption of Mt. Vesuvius, many were buried in the ruins. Some were found in deep vaults and some in lofty chambers. Yet, they found the Roman sentinel standing at the city gate. While the earth shook beneath him, he still stood at his post.

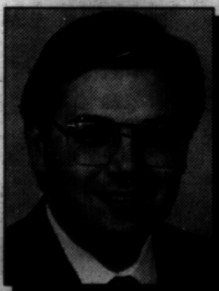
Our Captain, Jesus Christ has commanded us to compel souls to his church. We live in a dry and desolate place, a world where souls are desperately in need of the water of life.

Instructions to leaders (5:1-4). This is the first time Peter addresses any particular group within the church membership. Peter warned against all merce-

nary and selfish motives on the part of elders and members. The passage contains a final word on the ethics of submission which was so dear to Peter's heart.

The Greek word translated "elders" basically means "older men." Peter probably was addressing church leaders, though sometimes pastors are called elders. He exhorted them to shepherd the flock of God. This responsibility includes guiding, feeding, and protecting the flock.

The word "crown" in verse 4 refers to a wreath given to a victor in an athletic contest. This crown symbolized participation in the glory which was to be



Sims

revealed at the coming of Christ.

Insight for humility (5:5-7). Now, the attention is turned to the general church membership, beginning with the youth. The younger Christians were to submit themselves to the older Christians.

Peter urged the members to "be clothed with humility." The term "humility" describes an attitude of meekness. This analogy may well reflect Peter's experience in John 13 where Christ washed the feet of his disciples. This lesson of self-imposed lowliness made an indelible impression upon Peter.

The ideal pastoral ministry consists of God's people dedicated to their work and serving others for Jesus. Every church member must never forsake the attitude of "servant" for the Lord's sake.

Involvement during afflictions (5:8-10). The command to "be sober, be vigilant" calls on believers to be at their best. The term "adversary" describes Satan as the enemy of Christians. To compare the devil to a "roaring lion" emphasized his viciousness and destructiveness.

God's people are to resist the devil and be strong in their faith and know God will protect them. Remember, the devil is always awake, active, and alert, but Jesus has TOTAL AUTHORITY!

The word "resist" literally means to stand against. The only power we have against the devil is Jesus. The power is not of this world, but in God's holy Word. Power is not in drugs, illicit sex, gambling, or any sinful deed, but only in the blood of Jesus.

Keep in mind, there is power in the blood. God will grant us his power daily, if we ask in faith. Believe in victory over the devil, doubt, depression, and know the delight in God's word.

Informative closing words (5:11-14). Peter used Silvanus as a scribe in this writing, and now Peter apparently began to close the letter. Silvanus is generally thought to be Silas, Paul's faithful associate on his second missionary journey. "Marcus" was John Mark, who was the "drop-out" from Paul's first missionary journey. John Mark is a fine example of how God does not give up on those he calls. John Mark could not turn away from the call of God upon his life.

"Kiss of charity" was a way of greeting in New Testament times. The phrase, "the church that is at Babylon," referred to the church in the city of Rome.

We must remember that the church is not a club of saints, it is a hospital for sinners. Every member must learn to make their place of worship a place of love and grace. Be part of the solution, not the problem.

Sims is pastor of First Church, Pontotoc.



Bibliocipher

By Charles Marx
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XJU AEDNDRSRI AZGG
JDC IRVRZSR HDM, AERJ
HR OD DMC DK CEXC
VZCH, NEXFR DKK CER
SRIH UMNC KIDQ HDMI
KRRC KDI X CRNCZQDJH
XOXZJNC CERQ.

ZMFR JZJR: KZSR

Clue: O = G

Have fun with cryptography and exercise your Bible knowledge. A King James Version Bible verse has been encoded by letter substitution. The same letter is substituted throughout the puzzle. Solve by trial and error. Answer to last week's puzzle: Isaiah Twenty-Four Eleven.

Dear Pen Pal Club:

Hi. My name is Don Taylor Jr. and I live in Sherman, MS. I am 11 years old and I will be in the 6th grade this year. My hobbies are drawing, writing, camping, fishing, bike riding, swimming, and being with my friends. I attend Sherman Baptist Church and I go to North Pontotoc School. Please write me at 1042 Hwy. 910, Belden, MS 38826.

Your Pal,
Don Taylor Jr.
P.S. You can send a picture if you like.



Computers may draw youth to Sunday School

RIDGECREST, N.C. (BP) — According to the book, "Growing Up Digital" by Don Tapscott, 80 million children of baby boomers are the first generation to be born into a world of computers.

"These kids aren't afraid of digital machinery; they're masters of it," he wrote. While today's young people are using personal computers at home and school, with few exceptions, they're not using them at church.

"We're a felt-board church in a PC world," Kevin Boles, adult/youth Sunday School associate for the Louisiana Baptist Convention, told a group of youth workers attending his seminar, "Technology in Youth Sunday School on a Shoestring Budget." The session was part of a National Sunday School Leadership Training Conference, July 13-17 at Ridgecrest (N.C.) Conference Center.

Boles encouraged youth workers to find ways to integrate technology into their Sunday School lessons, adding, "It doesn't have to cost a fortune."

Teachers can start by mixing less expensive examples of technology into their classroom teaching, he said, such as using a "boom box" or more advanced sound system to play Christian music on audio-cassettes or compact discs.

"I always have music playing as young people enter the classroom," Boles said. "It results in more interaction — more fellowship. If I don't have it on, the kids tend to go right to their seats."

Other useful equipment is a VCR for

showing Christian videos or "video loops" that combine Bible study with Christian music video clips. Video cameras can be used on video scavenger hunts or in putting together a video drama related to the lesson.

Once teachers use this type of equipment, they'll be more confident in bringing the computer into the classroom, Boles said.

He encouraged workers to utilize computer-savvy youths' interests.

"Let one of them put the lesson outline into a PowerPoint presentation for you. Tell them what kind of graphics and photos you want with it. They'll usually say, 'No problem.'"

Another option is visiting youth-related Christian Internet sites either during class time or in preparation for the lesson. Boles and other youth workers in his seminar mentioned the following sites as good resources:

◆ www.youthscape.com — an Internet web site produced by the youth Sunday School ministry department at LifeWay Christian Resources of the Southern Baptist Convention.

It includes several resources for youth teachers, including Youth EXTRA! teaching helps which relate lessons for all three Bible study curriculum series to current events in the news;

◆ www.studentz.com — a site produced by the Southern Baptist North American Mission Board that includes youth-related evangelism and missions information and news about First Priority on-campus Bible study clubs;

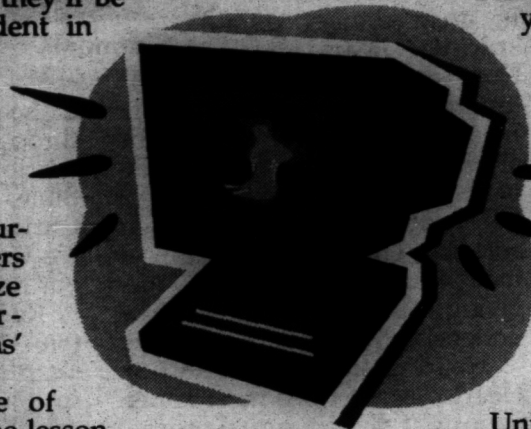
◆ www.youthpastor.com — includes numerous helps for youth pastors, such as searchable database of games; Bible study lessons by topic; and e-mail mailing lists by denomination, organization or geographical area;

◆ www.everyschool.com — lists every high school in the United States and whether they have on-campus Bible studies.

Some youth Sunday School classes or church youth programs create their own Internet web pages, Boles said, including everything from a calendar of events to the plan of salvation.

Tech-savvy teachers also gather addresses of students with e-mail access and send out prayer requests, updates about activities and events and other class-related news.

"Above all else, think creatively," Boles said. "That can make all the difference in your classes."



Prof cites teens' desire for caring relationships

RIDGECREST, N.C. (BP) — In a recent University of Chicago study, signaling devices were distributed to thousands of teens across America.

The students were "beeped" at different times of day over several weeks and instructed to write down what they were thinking or feeling at the time.

So, what was most often on their minds? "They were lonely; almost terrified of being alone," Brian Richardson told youth workers attending his seminar, "Building a Better Teen."

The session was part of the National Sunday School Leadership Training Conference, July 13-17 at Ridgecrest (N.C.) Conference Center.

"What do most of today's youth need from you?" Richardson, professor of youth education at Southern Seminary, Louisville, Ky., asked.

"They need you to care. They need personal, caring relationships."

Building rapport with teens requires getting to know them at their level, Richardson said.

Among negative characteristics of today's teens,

who are often called "millennials," Richardson said they are busy, lazy, confused, used to instant gratification and often unable to understand the long-term commitment required for spiritual growth.

On the positive side, they have an increased interest in their right to engage in religious clubs on campus, they are ambitious to clean and build the physical world, they will maintain the warmest of intergenerational bonds and they have an interest in community and collective peer action.

When it comes to religion, Richardson said many of today's youth question a need for God. "This is growing out of the educational humanistic influence in their early lives that focuses on human potential," Richardson said.

Those who do express an interest in religion, he said, demonstrate erratic Bible study attendance patterns and often have short attention spans.

Richardson encouraged youth workers to help teens grow spiritually by:

◆ speaking to them about your own spiritual struggles and victories.
◆ encouraging them

to be involved in ministry.

◆ respecting their styles and methods of spiritual growth.

◆ providing an atmosphere that encourages and affirms spiritual growth.

◆ providing helpful Bible study tools and methods.

Youth workers can help

teens establish and maintain a daily devotional time, Richardson said, by helping them see the need for a consistent time of day, a place that is free from interruptions, quality Bible study materials and making it a priority in their lives.

NEW TESTAMENT WOMEN

Circle the names of the New Testament women listed below.

BNCUEVTC PWSNDRVAXASO
HEIGMCFKNCOATHNUSPDA
EKA OAPISARHICNQOFIMI
COEILJWNMTBHASHBGCOS
PSLDHBDORUTSOPAVAXYL
GUMHNAAYCEUQYIOLSNZE
JCÉQCOPEBSBRDALJTKNO
SFLEPHKAAYTUHIPEHITA
IAHCERSLNBVCRCNEBPL
VJONFIOATLBSUHJGOPZA
QFANLMAECFICEXAIFYP
EYIEEPSHORSUZDKIMRUH
HCHTNKBUEPOBTEAHALAS
JRIEFEMCJDVDFWZMIORK
YOWNRGLNIHLIAOPYAHCO
BPACUOUALYDEKGNHZRVA
MOHNIEDXDBPACVTSOBIW
SAGTNOHIYGOKPRUAFEXS
WNAYHAAGAIASALMODTBP
HIUREOMBVSXMYNCEVAIE

ANNA
APPHIA
BERNICE
CANDACE
CHLOE
CLAUDIA
DAMARIS
DORCAS
ELISABETH
EUNICE
EUODIA
HERODIAS
JOANNA
JULIA
LOIS
LYDIA
MAGDALENE
MARTHA
MARY
PHOEBE
PRISCILLA
RHODA
SALOME
SUSANNA
SYNTECHE
TRYPHENA
TRYPHOSA